

REMARKS

Claims 18-34 are pending in this application. No amendments to the claims are made with this Response.

The specification has been amended to insert a claim of priority to U.S. Provisional Pat. App. No. 60/173,980, filed December 30, 1999. No new matter is added with this amendment. A Petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(6) for acceptance of an unintentionally delayed claim for priority is being filed concurrently with this Response/RCE.

Claims 18-34 stand rejected over U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2002/0023130. Claims 18-20 and 23-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Stettner, and claims 21-22, 26, and 28-33 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Stettner. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Stettner has, at the earliest, a priority date of August 10, 2000.¹ The present application is entitled to a priority date of December 30, 1999. Thus, Stettner is not prior art to the present application, and all claim rejections based on Stettner should be withdrawn.

Applicant reserves the right to swear behind Stettner, and also reserves the right to continue to distinguish Stettner on the grounds submitted in the previous Response (or on other grounds).

No fee is believed due in connection with this Response (other than the RCE and extension of time fees separately authorized). If any other fee is required, please charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 50-0310.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ Applicant has not attempted to determine whether Stettner's provisional application (60/224,736) contains the teachings on which the Examiner relies.